WORK SOCIOGRAM

How do we choose good change leaders? One of the standard tools in the field of social network analysis—the *sociogram*—can help identify candidates for change leader, and shed light on why change projects don't produce change, as well as on how to design effective change teams.

FIGURE 8a is a simple social network diagram that shows the working relationships in a group of eight colleagues. It is readily apparent that some individuals depend heavily on others at work, while others are fairly isolated.
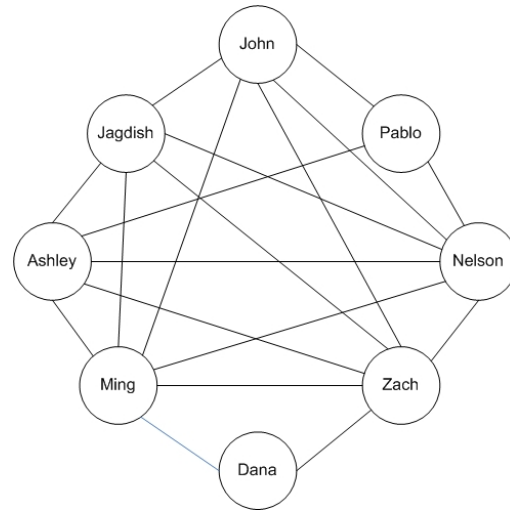

FIGURE 8a: Simple Work Sociogram

We can add more information by indicating the *frequency of contact* between individuals.
For example, in FIGURE 8b, thick heavy lines may indicate heavy interaction between two colleagues, such as working together on certain tasks or exchanging information on a daily basis. Thin black lines may indicate occasional collaboration a few times per week, while dashed lines may indicate that individuals rarely work together. In FIGURE 8b, for example, Nelson heavily depends on, or is heavily depended on by, several individuals on a daily basis. In contrast, Dana at the bottom works only with Zach on a daily basis.
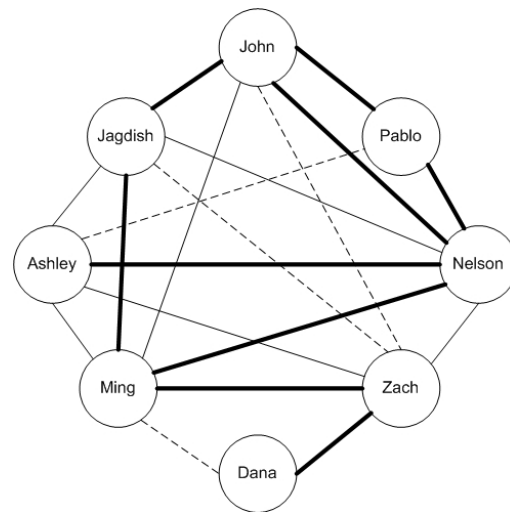

FIGURE 8b: Weighted Work Sociogram

We can add another layer of complexity by indicating the type of relationship people have. In any organization, there will always be people who *do not like* working with certain individuals. FIGURE 8c captures this with the red lines. This is natural in any organization, and does not mean these individuals cannot work together efficiently. Such a diagram, however, provides clues on who can better lead change efforts (i.e., Nelson), as well as who may not be successful (i.e., Dana).
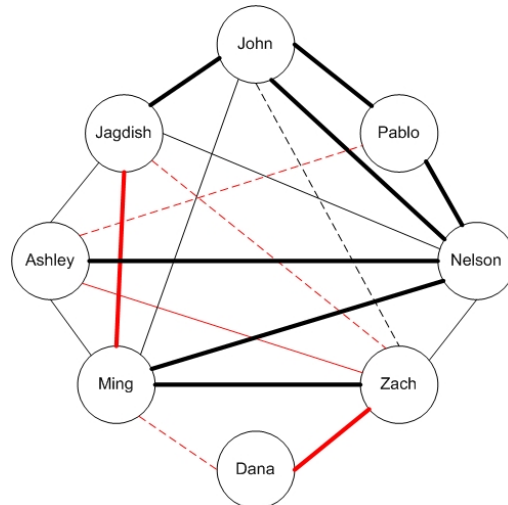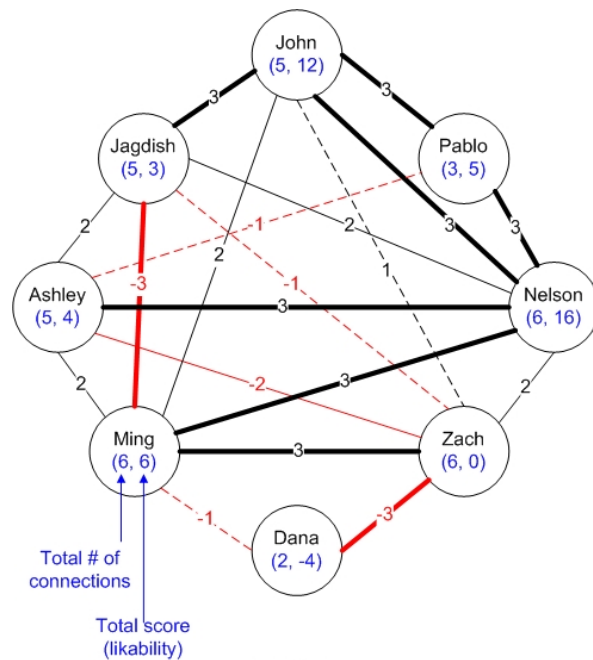
We can then attempt to measure individuals' degree of connectivity, as well as the degree to which each one is liked or disliked and thus have a sense of the network's overall health.

FIGURE 8d shows an example of such a scheme. While measuring the strength of these relationships is difficult, a good change leader will have a sense of how well two people work together. If a change leader's perceptions are accurate, then such a diagram is a powerful tool to identify and nurture future change leaders, and to support other staff.

FIGURE 8c: Weighted, Bicolor Work Sociogram

FIGURE 8d: A More Complicated Sociogram